



Statistical notice

Universal infant free school meals - schools offering a hot meal option from the start of autumn term 2014

Background

On 1 September 2014 all state-funded schools in England became required by law to offer all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2, a free school meal.

This statistical notice gives the results of a survey of all local authorities (LAs) in England on the expected delivery of a hot meal option by schools in their area. The survey was conducted between 11 August and 22 August 2014. Data from LAs was supplemented with information from 14 large multi-academy trusts (with more than 10 schools with infant provision).

The total number of state-funded schools with infants expected to be open at the start of autumn term 2014 was 16,481.

Results

Table 1: Schools offering a hot meal option, for those schools where a response was provided

Will the school be offering a hot meal option?	by the start of the autumn term 2014		by the start of the spring term in January 2015	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	15,080	98.5%	15,258	99.6%
No	234	1.5%	56 ¹	0.4%
Total number of schools ²	15,314	100%	15,314	100%

The results are based on LAs' assessment in August of the expected delivery of schools in their area.

¹ This includes 21 schools where the LA did not expect a hot meal option to be offered at the start of the autumn term, but did not know whether they would be offering a hot meal option by the spring term

² Based on a response covering 93% of eligible schools – LAs did not have information on all schools in their area (these schools were mainly academies or maintained schools not covered by the LA catering contract)

The UIFSM support service³ is continuing to work with schools reported as not on track to deliver hot meals. The numbers provided in this release do not therefore provide information on the actual number of schools where a hot meal will not be provided in January, as the work of the support service between September and January can be expected to improve the position.

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³ The UIFSM support service is run by the Children's Food Trust and Lead Association for Catering in Education, in partnership with a range of school food experts.